

Triodia pascoeana (Poaceae), a new species from the
western Kimberley

B.K. Simon

Queensland Herbarium, Meiers Road, Indooroopilly, Queensland 4068

Abstract

Simon, B.K. *Triodia pascoeana* (Poaceae), a new species from the western Kimberley. Nuytsia 8 (2): 241-243 (1992). *Triodia pascoeana*, from the limestone and associated areas of the western Kimberley, is diagnosed and described as new. It is compared with some other species of *Triodia*, and its ecology is discussed briefly.

Introduction

As a member of the Kimberley Research Project, Western Australia, 1988, I made a collection of grasses in areas of the western Kimberley. Among the specimens collected was a large non-resinous species of *Triodia* in the area of the Napier Range near Yammera Gap. Subsequent correspondence with Surrey Jacobs, of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney, a specialist in the ecology and taxonomy of *Triodia*, established this to be a new species.

Triodia pascoeana B. Simon, sp. nov. (Figure 1)

Species *Triodia microstachya* R. Br. affinis, sed culmis minoribus robustis et non resinaceis, paniculis densioribus et pluribus multis spiculis.

Typus: Western Australia, Dampier District: NE slope of Napier Range 3 km N of the Gibb River road on track that passes 'Napier Downs' homestead near Yammera Gap, 17° 51' S, 124° 48' E, 13 April 1988, B.K. Simon 3909 (holo: BRI; iso: BRI, PERTH, CANB, DNA, K, NSW).

Hummock-forming, non-resinous *perennial*, to 2 m tall and 5 m diam. *Leaves:* sheath 4-5 mm wide, ± loose, persistent, glabrous; ligule a ciliolate fringe to 0.2 mm long; blade stiff, pungent, to 30 cm long. Inflorescence a panicle to 40 cm long, the spikelets racemosely arranged on the numerous whorled to scattered branches which are ± appressed except at anthesis. *Spikelets* 4-6-flowered, shortly pedicellate, 4-6 mm long. *Glumes* lanceolate, acute to aristate, scabrid along the midnerve, unequal; lower glume 2-2.5 mm long; upper glume 3-3.5 mm long. *Lemmas* 2-2.5 mm long, 3-nerved, glabrous, with 3 minute, subequal lobes. *Palea* subequal to the lemma.

Other specimen examined. WESTERN AUSTRALIA: 39 miles [63 km] E of Fitzroy Crossing on main road, 23 July 1970, R.C. Carolin 7408 (SYD, photo BRI).

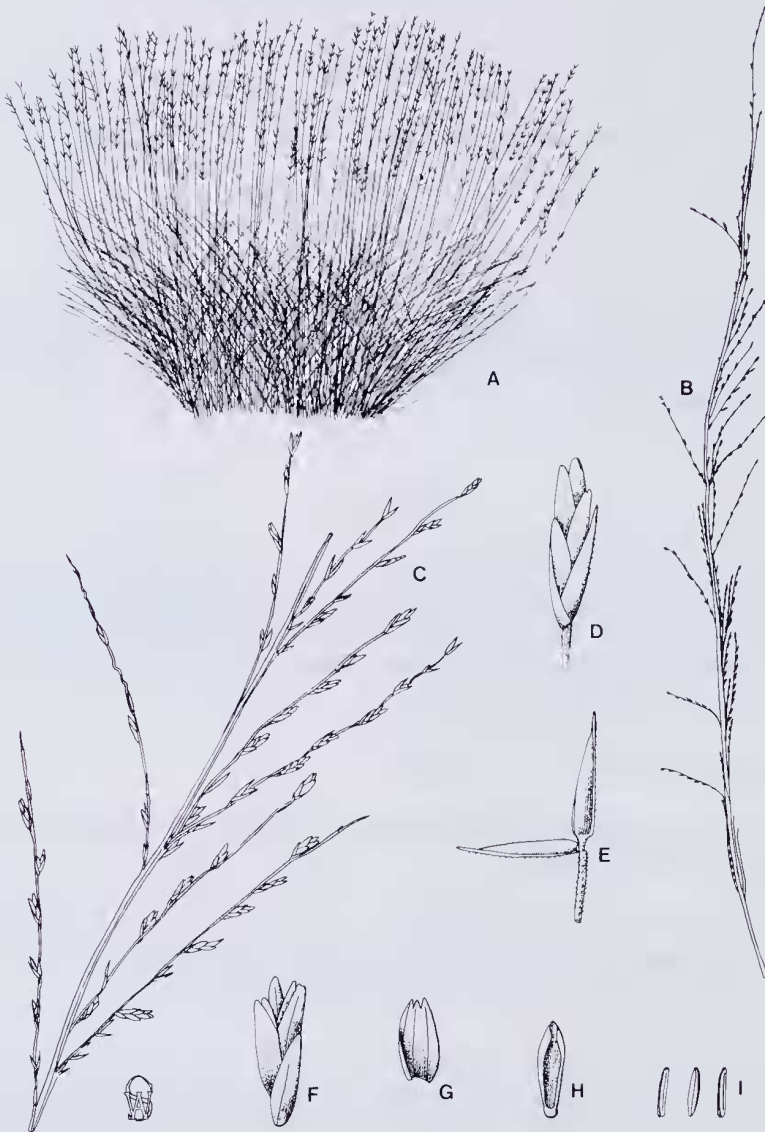


Figure 1. *Triodiapascoeana*. A - habit x 0.08. B - inflorescence x 0.5. C - portion of inflorescence x 1. D - spikelet. E - glumes. F - spikelet with glumes removed. G - lemma. H - palea. I - anthers. D-I, all x 8. Drawn from type specimen.

Distribution. On the limestone ranges of the western Kimberley and along the watercourses and associated floodplains leading from these ranges.

Habitat. Limestone ranges and gorges, and watercourses leading from limestone ranges. It grows together with *Triodia intermedia* and the two species are co-dominant understorey species in the savanna parkland and tree savanna on the summit and limestone gorges of the range. *Adansonia gregorii*, *Lysiphyllum cunninghamii* and *Eucalyptus papuana* are the dominant woody species with which it is associated. *T. pascoeana* also grows in watercourses and floodplains leading from the limestone ranges and in this habitat the dimensions of the hummocks and spikelets (Jacobs, in press) are somewhat larger. According to Jacobs it is the largest of all *Triodia* species and the only one growing on good alluvial soil.

Flowering period. Mainly during and shortly after the Wet.

Conservation status. A fairly common species in the limestone ranges and watercourses. Its habitat is not under pressure from grazing so its status is reasonably secure.

Etymology. It is named in honour of the late David Pascoe, Director of Operations, Kimberley 88. David organized the day-to-day running of the project very efficiently. He passed away on 29 July 1989 after an illness, bravely borne. He is survived by his wife, Jennie, who was Radio Operator and First Aid Officer on the project.

Notes. The species has very small spikelets for a species of *Triodia* and is fairly common in the area of collection. The very fine panicles of this *Triodia* species are unlike those of other species of *Triodia*. The spikelets have some resemblance to those of *T. microstachya* in that the apex of the lemma has three minute teeth, but in that species the culms are resinous and the panicle is denser and has many more spikelets.

Acknowledgements

I thank the Linnaean Society of London and the Royal Geographical Society, together with their sponsors, for the opportunity of taking part in the Kimberley Research Project, Western Australia, 1988. In particular I thank Professor Andrew Goudie (University of Oxford) and Martin Sands (Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew), leader and deputy-leader respectively, Bruce Maslin (Western Australian Herbarium) for overseeing the shipment of botanical specimens back to Brisbane and Clyde Dunlop (Conservation Commission of the Northern Territory) for providing transport to the Kimberley from Darwin and for the use of collecting equipment. I am grateful to Surrey Jacobs for exchange of information concerning this species and for supplying a photocopy and a few spikelets of *R.C. Carolin* 7408. I thank my colleagues at the Queensland Herbarium and William Smith for the line illustration (Figure 1).

Reference

Jacobs, S.W.L. (in press) *Triodia*. In J.R. Wheeler (ed.), "Flora of the Kimberley Region".